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*Some STATISTICS relating to the CIVIL SERVICE.**By HORACE MANN, Esq.**

[Read before Section F, British Association, at Norwich, August, 1868.]

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I SHALL probably not be far wrong in assuming that in very few minds does the term “Civil Service” call up any definite conception of an organised body, such as is at once presented when the “army” or the “navy” is mentioned. In the latter case, every one pictures to himself an aggregate of so many regiments or so many ships containing so many men, divided into a few well-known grades. In the former everything is vague. Where the civil service begins or ends—how many separate departments there are—what is the aggregate force and how classified—what the annual cost and how distributed—these and other questions, if ever asked, are probably never answered, except to some extent by those who make or move the annual “Estimates.”

The object of this paper is to supply a few (though only a few) facts and figures, so that outsiders may obtain a notion of the civil service which, though necessarily still vague enough, shall at least be more palpable in its vagueness than that which is generally entertained.

I.—Numerical Force of the Civil Service.

The numerical force of the civil service, exclusive of that portion which is strictly local and paid for wholly out of local funds, somewhat exceeds 100,000 persons. By a careful analysis, made from the “Estimates” for 1859-60 and the “Finance Accounts”

* Although the precaution is probably unnecessary, it may, nevertheless, be as well, considering the official relations of the writer, to state that this paper is written by him entirely in his private capacity, and that he alone is responsible for its contents.

of 1858-59, and printed in the Report of the Select Committee on Civil Service Appointments (1860), it appears that the total number of persons at that time on the lists of the various departments (excepting the legal departments), was 104,884. Supposing that no material change has occurred since 1860, and adding 2,284, the number which a recent return ascribes to the legal departments, the total at present would be nearly 107,000. At all events this number may be taken as sufficiently accurate for the purpose of conveying a general impression on the subject.

II.—*Classification.*

Any classification of this total must, of course, be to a certain extent arbitrary, but the following may be better than none :—

HEADS OF DEPARTMENTS	197
<i>Political</i>	38
<i>Non-political</i>	159
SUB-HEADS OF DEPARTMENTS AND HEADS OF BRANCHES.....	1,682
CLERKS	14,596
INFERIOR OFFICERS	39,023
<i>In-door</i> (messengers, &c.)	2,457
<i>Out-door</i>	36,566
TEMPORARY OFFICERS	396
<i>Clerks</i>	390
<i>Inferior</i>	6
PROFESSIONAL OFFICERS	4,184
<i>Superior</i>	2,263
<i>Inferior</i>	1,921
ARTISANS AND LABOURERS	30,438
WOMEN	780
PERSONS PERMANENTLY, BUT NOT WHOLLY, EMPLOYED	15,243
	<hr/>
	106,539

This account may be roughly said to include all the services which are paid for out of the general, as distinct from the local, taxation of the United Kingdom.

III.—*Number of Departments.*

The number of separate offices or departments is not easily stated, because many of those which are subordinate to large superintending departments, such as the Home Office or the Treasury, are really separate in respect of locality, management, and organisation; being merely attached to the common centre for purposes of patronage, or for ultimate appeal on fundamental questions. Including these, the total would be about 112, ranging from the Post Office, with its 25,000 officers, to several departments whose whole staff consists of only two or three.

IV.—*Cost*

The total cost of the civil service, including not only the salaries and wages of the above number of persons, but also rent, postage, printing, and every kind of incidental charge, may be stated, in round numbers, on the authority of Mr. Childers, at 10,800,000*l.*; which is the sum voted by the House of Commons in the current year, with the addition of certain amounts charged upon the consolidated fund, and of other amounts obtained (as in the case of the courts of law) from fees paid by the public.

This general outline of the civil service may serve to introduce the more immediate object of this paper, which is to show, by a few illustrations, the extremely disjointed character of this service, and the urgent want of some authority by which a greater degree of order and unity might be introduced. Of course I do not forget that anomalies and irregularities have special attractions for many persons, and are supposed to be peculiarly appropriate to the genius of the English nation. The only question, therefore, will be whether these necessary or desirable characteristics are not exhibited, in the present case, in somewhat excessive force.

V.—*Nomenclature.*

One illustration might be found at the very outset in the nomenclature of the service; sometimes a variety of terms being applied to those who discharge identical functions—sometimes the same appellations being used to describe the holders of very different situations. Compared with the sister services, in which the rank of each officer is distinctly indicated by the designation, nothing can appear more confusing than a nomenclature where a comprehensive title covers wide distinctions, while a multitude of names is used for practically similar offices. This confusion is of more significance in various ways than might at first sight appear; but other and more striking illustrations of anarchy claim the limited space to be occupied by this paper.

VI.—*Remuneration.*

Let us, for instance, glance next at the *remuneration* of the service. Of course, where the nature of the duties varies, it is to be expected that the amount of recompense will vary; and if the many different rates of payment to be found in the “*Estimates*” really represent corresponding differences in the work performed, the result is creditable to the discrimination of the authorities by whom the nicely graduated rates were fixed. Whether this can be assumed, however, may perhaps be rendered somewhat clearer by reference to the facts relating to one portion of the service, viz.,

the regular "established clerks." These are usually grouped in classes, each class having a distinct scale of salary. *A priori*, therefore, one would expect to find not more than half-a-dozen classes, and the same number of scales; the difference between one department and another in amount and difficulty of work being shown by the larger or smaller proportion of clerks in the higher or lower classes. An analysis, however, of Division II of the "Estimates" (see the annexed Table A), shows that the 892 clerks belonging to the departments included in this division, have no fewer than ninety distinct scales of salary, the lowest being 70*l.*, rising by 5*l.* annually to 120*l.*, and the highest being 700*l.*, rising by 25*l.* annually to 1,000*l.* In this enumeration I have excluded all officers occupying special posts, though in many cases not receiving higher salary than the classified clerks; and also, on the one hand, such superintending officers, as "chief clerks," "principal clerks," &c., and, on the other hand, all supplementary and extra clerks. Had these been included, the number of scales would have been still more numerous. In so many scales, the differences between one and another are, as might be expected, in some cases exceedingly slight. For example: there are four scales, all beginning with 80*l.*, and all having an annual increment of 10*l.*; but the maxima are, respectively, 120*l.*, 130*l.*, 150*l.*, and 180*l.* Again: there are three scales having each a minimum of 100*l.* and a maximum of 300*l.*, the difference being that the annual increment is in one case 10*l.*, in another 15*l.*, and in the third 10*l.* for the first eight years, and 15*l.* afterwards. Other instances of the slightest possible differences will be seen in the detailed table annexed. It is possible, of course, that all these ninety varieties, and the others which these ninety indicate, result from the skilful nicety with which the respective merits of the clerks have been valued by the authorities who fix the rates; but another supposition is at least allowable, and perhaps plausible, viz., that there has been no real, effective, competent authority at all, and that scales have been fixed very much at hazard or caprice, without reference to any guiding principle whatever.

As already mentioned, the preceding facts refer to the established clerks alone. It may, however, be interesting to see to what extent the civil service accepts a lower kind of agency, such as forms a large proportion of the labour in all private establishments, paid at a lower rate, and occupied entirely upon mechanical or semi-mechanical work. I have myself little doubt that at least half the work of most of the public departments is of this description, and that it might be most efficiently as well as most economically performed by a subordinate class, recruited from a lower stratum of society than that to which the ordinary clerks belong. Taking, then, as before, Class II of the "Estimates" as sufficiently repre-

senting the whole service, it appears that the number of supplementary, copying, extra, and temporary clerks is about 110, against 892 belonging to the higher grades of clerkships; the proportion being one to eight. For these 110 persons there are sixteen distinct scales of remuneration, the lowest entrance-salary being 62*l.*, which applies to eight persons only; all the rest entering at various amounts, from 78*l.* upwards. Why, for mere copying purposes, there should not be a class of younger assistants, such as are found in solicitors' offices, to whom 30*l.* or 40*l.* a-year would be a great sum, seems difficult of explanation, unless we find one in the fact (which may also explain the reason of the large excess of "established clerks") that the Government service is a patronage service, and that salaries therefore, when fixed in times past, may have been adapted more to the social position of those for whom the patrons wished to provide, than to the value of the work to be performed.

VII.—*Competitive Examinations.*

I will, however, pass from this tempting subject (with which I hope to deal more fully on a future occasion) and give two or three more illustrations, drawn this time from the system of examination conducted by the Civil Service Commissioners. That system, as is probably well-known to many here, is founded on an Order in Council, issued in 1855, which requires that all persons proposed to be appointed to the civil service shall be examined, and, if competent, certificated. The nature of the examination is prescribed by the heads of the respective departments, who also, except where the Treasury has the patronage, determine whether the examination shall be competitive or not. The result is—contrary to what might be inferred from the recent statements of such high authorities as the Chancellor of the Exchequer, Sir Charles Trevelyan, and Mr. Childers—that competition, instead of being so universally adopted as to include even the lower class of out-door appointments, has not in any case been applied to the class referred to, and only partially and fitfully to the higher class. Thus, to put the point statistically, it appears from the last report of the Civil Service Commissioners, that in the year 1866 there were 3,038 persons nominated to inferior situations, not one of whom was examined competitively, or in anything but the most elementary tests to which a man or child could be subjected. In the same year the number of clerkships and similar situations to which appointments were made was 962, of which number 281 were filled by means of limited competition, and 681 without any competition. In only three cases does anything like open competition appear to have been tried, viz., for a supplementary clerkship in the Civil Service Com-

mission, for copying clerkships in the Probate Court, and for the situations of apprentice and engineer student in the dockyards and steam factories under the Admiralty. As to the other departments, competition seems to be adopted by some and not by others; where adopted, to be sometimes tried and sometimes not; and where tried, to be sometimes tried with one number of competitors, and sometimes with another number—the proportion varying from a maximum of six candidates per vacancy in a few instances, to a minimum of one and a-half candidates per vacancy (the average being under three per vacancy)—all nominated in the usual course of patronage. Thus, it will be seen that, as to the competitive principle, it is neither uniformly adopted for the service, nor uniformly applied where it is formally adopted.

VIII.—*Schemes of Examination.*

A similar diversity prevails with regard to the subjects of examination. These are fixed by the chief authorities of each department, and the consequence is, that nearly every office has a scheme differing from every other scheme in some particular, often of the most trivial character. Of course where duties differ, the examinations should generally differ, and therefore a considerable diversity of schemes is inevitable; as special and technical subjects must be introduced to meet the requirements of certain situations. It will be readily seen, however, on inspection of the list in the Civil Service Commissioners' Reports, that numerous variations exist in schemes for situations of essentially the same description. Thus, for temporary and copying clerks, constituting, with few exceptions, one homogeneous class, there are no fewer than thirty-one schemes; for ordinary established clerkships, as many as eighty-eight schemes; for messengers, &c., nine schemes: the entire number for the whole service being two hundred and twenty.

An idea of the kind and degree of difference which some departments think it worth while to propose, may be gained by reference to the subject of arithmetic, as it appears in the schemes for established clerkships, for which, it might be supposed, the same amount might in all cases be prescribed. By far the most general requirement, under this head, is "arithmetic, up to and including vulgar and decimal fractions;" but the following variations from this standard have been adopted:—

1. *Arithmetic*: the first four rules, practice and the rule of three.
2. *Arithmetic*: first four rules.
3. *Arithmetic*: including rule of three, practice, and the arithmetical tables.

4. *Arithmetic*: including vulgar and decimal fractions, square root, and the use of logarithms.
5. *Arithmetic*: including vulgar fractions.
6. *Arithmetic*: including reduction, proportion, practice, and bills of parcels.
7. *Arithmetic*: first four rules and rule of three.
8. *Arithmetic*: including vulgar and decimal fractions, and the principles of exchange.
9. *Arithmetic*: including proportion and decimal fractions.
10. *Arithmetic*: including vulgar and decimal fractions, calculation of percentages and averages.
11. *Arithmetic*: first four rules, with reduction and proportion.
12. *Arithmetic*: including vulgar and decimal fractions, purchase of stock, and exchange.
13. *Arithmetic*: including reduction, proportion, and practice.

Variations in other cases are produced by the inclusion or omission of such subjects as English composition, geography, history, précis writing, book-keeping, ancient or modern languages, &c.—sometimes one of these being prescribed, sometimes another or others—often without any apparent reason for the preference. On the whole, it can hardly be doubted that so large a number as two hundred and twenty separate schemes is excessive, and that a considerable reduction might with advantage be effected by the amalgamation of nearly half of them.

IX.—*Limits of Age.*

My remaining illustration is drawn from the same source, viz., the examinations for the service; the unnecessary distinctions being found in the *limits of age*, which the Order in Council requires to be fixed for all situations under Government. Of course, in this respect, as with regard to subjects of examination, there are substantial differences between many situations, which make different limits of age quite necessary. But the table annexed (B), shows that the number of distinct limits reaches as high as ninety-three! Of this number thirty apply to established clerkships and similar appointments; twenty-four to temporary, extra, and copying clerks; and twenty to messengers, &c. The difference between one limit and another is often extremely slight, and probably quite unnecessary for official purposes. In the case, for example, of the ordinary clerkships, the following are some of the limits prescribed by the various departments:—

From 16 to 23 years of age.	From 18 to 24 years of age.
" 16 " 25 "	" 18 " 25 "
" 16 " 28 "	" 18 " 26 "
" 16 " 30 "	" 18 " 28 "
" 18 " 22 "	" 18 " 30 "
" 18 " 23 "	

And so on. That these trivial distinctions correspond to any sufficient difference in the circumstances of the several departments, is obviously incredible. The inference which a critic might naturally draw from the figures is, that in many cases the limits have been selected very much at random, while in others they have been adapted to the age of the patron's nominee, rather than chosen as the best, on general grounds, for the service.

These illustrations might easily be extended, but probably the foregoing are sufficient for the purpose of this paper, viz., to make confusion conspicuous, and to indicate a picture of disorder—the natural result of a disintegrated service. Those who have heard Haydn's oratorio of the "Creation," will recollect that it opens with a musical "representation of chaos." How far he has succeeded in his attempt I am not critic enough to decide; but this paper will certainly fail of its design if it do not leave on the mind an impression, however faint, of the civil service as a chaotic mass of unorganised elements—an aggregate of separate departments governed, in many points, by no principles, or no common principles—with different kinds of work for the same kind of officer, and different kinds of officers for the same kind of work—with varying nomenclature, varying remuneration, varying standards of examination,* and varying practice as to the mode of appointment; all these variations being out of all proportion to the real varieties existing in the subject-matter dealt with. What would be the appropriate remedy for some at least of the evils of this state of things, is a question which must be reserved for another opportunity.

* There seems to be a very general belief that the limits of age, and subjects of examination are fixed by the Civil Service Commissioners. This, however, is not the case. The Order in Council provides that the rules on these points are to be settled at the discretion of the chief authorities of each department.

NOTE as to *Political Patronage in the Civil Service.*

As much misapprehension seems to exist with respect to the extent to which political patronage has been abolished by the examination system now in force, it may be as well to explain that it has not been abolished at all. The right of nominating to situations in the civil service remains, with but few exceptions, in the same hands as before; subject only to a check, in the shape of an examination, against the appointment of incompetent persons, and to the further condition, in some cases, that each nominee must take his chance of being the best of two or three competitors. It will be seen, therefore, that the range of patronage has been increased instead of diminished. Formerly one person only was nominated for each situation, which he obtained almost as a matter of course; but now, for every vacancy in the principal departments there is (1) a preliminary test examination; and (2) a competitive examination of those who pass this test. As about half of the candidates fail to pass the test, and as of those who do pass, three are generally nominated to compete for each vacancy, it follows that for a given number of vacancies, there are, in these departments, about six times as many nominations as were made under the old system of direct appointment. As some candidates, however, receive more than one nomination, and as competition is not uniformly adopted, the number of *persons nominated* is not so great as the number of *nominations*, and may be estimated, as above, at about four times the ancient number. Consequently the situations in many departments (including all those under the control of the Treasury), furnish the means of conferring favours on six times as many persons, and represent favours actually conferred on four times as many persons as were favoured formerly. It is true that the value of the favours is not now so great, for the chance of a prize is of course not so valuable as the certainty; but the question is, not whether the obligation to the minister is as weighty as before, but whether it is *sufficient for its purpose*. If it is sufficient, the effect, so far as political influence is concerned, must be just as great whether 12,000 candidates receive 12,000 places, or whether 12,000 candidates receive a chance of obtaining 3,000 places. In each case, the relation of obligor and obligee is established between the same number of persons; and if this number represents an increase of 400 per cent., the influence of patronage, whether for good or evil, has been extended in the same proportion.

APPENDIX.

A.—*Table showing the various Scales of Salary assigned to Established Clerkships (excluding Chief Clerks, Principal Clerks, Supplementary Clerks, &c.), in the various Departments comprised in Class II of the Estimates for 1868-69.*

Scales of Salary.			Number of Persons Receiving Salary under each Scale.	Scales of Salary.			Number of Persons Receiving Salary under each Scale.
Minimum.	Annual Increase.	Maximum.		Minimum.	Annual Increase.	Maximum.	
£	£	£		£	£	£	
70	5	120	6	200	10	280	2
70	5	150	7	200	10	300	17
80	10	120	4	200	15	300	10
80	10	130	5	200	10	320	9
80	10	150	2	250	—	250	1
80	10	180	6	250	15	340	7
90	5	120	1	250	10	350	6
90	10	130	1	250	15	350	21
90	10	140	2	250	15	360	6
90	10	150	25	250	{ 10* 15 }	400	2
90	10	180	14				
90	{ 10* 15 }	280	32	250	15	400	1
100	—			260	15	360	7
100	5	100	2	300	—	300	5
100	10	150	1	300	10	320	1
100	10	150	13	300	10	400	1
100	8	160	1	300	15	400	16
100	10	170	20	300	15	420	14
100	10	180	7	300	15	500	14
100	10	200	27	300	20	500	5
100	10	220	20	300	15	600	12
100	10	230	1	315	15	500	57
100	10	240	19	320	15	420	8
100	10	250	21	320	20	600	17
100	15	250	8	340	15	480	8
100	10	300	36	350	20	450	8
100	{ 10* 15 }	300	102	350	15	500	7
100	15			350	15	545	10
100	15	300	42	350	20	600	26
100	15	400	13	375	20	500	5
105	—	105	1	380	20	500	4
130	5	160	1	400	—	400	1
130	10	250	2	400	15	500	4
140	10	180	5	400	20	500	4
150	10	200	9	400	20	600	10
150	10	230	1	400	20	700	2
150	10	240	1	500	20	600	5
150	10	300	9	520	20	650	6
150	15	400	1	550	20	650	8
160	10	250	7	600	—	600	1
160	10	280	9	600	20	800	4
160	15	300	6	650	15	800	7
170	10	230	1	670	20	800	2
170	10	260	1				
180	10	280	1	700	25	900	7
180	10	300	10	700	25	1,000	16
200	—	200	4				
200	10	250	1				
							892

* i.e. 10% for the first eight years, and 15% afterwards.

B.—Table showing the various Limits of Age prescribed by the several Departments; and the Number of Distinct Classes of Situation to which each Limit is applicable.

Limits of Age.	Classes of Situation.				Limits of Age.	Classes of Situation.			
	Ordinary Clerks.	Extra and Temporary Clerks, Writers, &c.	Messengers and Porters.	Total of every Kind.		Ordinary Clerks.	Extra and Temporary Clerks, Writers, &c.	Messengers and Porters.	Total of every Kind.
0 to 30	—	—	—	3	19 to 28	1	—	—	1
0 „ 35	—	2	—	13	19 „ 40	—	—	—	1
0 „ 38	—	—	—	1	20 „ 23	—	—	—	1
0 „ 40	—	—	4	12	20 „ 25	—	—	—	3
0 „ 42	2	—	—	2	20 „ 26	—	—	—	1
0 „ 45	—	—	—	6	20 „ 30	1	—	—	7
0 „ 50	—	—	—	3	20 „ 35	1	1	17	30
12 „ 18	—	—	1	1	20 „ 36	—	—	—	1
13 „ 15	—	—	—	1	20 „ 40	—	—	4	18
13 „ 17	—	—	—	1	20 „ 45	—	—	1	1
13½ „ 15	—	—	—	1	21 „ 25	—	—	—	1
14 „ 16	—	—	—	1	21 „ 26	—	—	—	1
14 „ 18	1	—	—	1	21 „ 30	1	—	1	5
14 „ 19	—	1	—	1	21 „ 31	2	—	—	2
14 „ 20	—	—	1	1	21 „ 35	4	—	9	18
14 „ 30	—	1	—	1	21 „ 38	—	—	1	1
15 „ 16	—	—	—	1	21 „ 40	—	—	2	8
16 „ 19	—	—	—	1	21 „ 41	—	—	1	3
16 „ 20	—	1	—	1	21 „ 50	—	—	—	1
16 „ 23	2	—	—	2	22 „ 30	2	—	—	2
16 „ 25	6	2	1	15	23 „ 30	—	—	—	1
16 „ 28	1	1	—	2	23 „ 35	1	—	—	1
16 „ 30	9	4	1	14	23 „ 38	—	—	—	1
16 „ 35	1	—	—	4	23 „ 40	—	—	—	3
16 „ 40	—	3	—	5	23 „ 42	—	—	—	1
16 „ 0	—	—	—	1	23 „ 44	—	—	1	1
17 „ 23	—	—	—	1	24 „ 35	—	—	—	1
17 „ 24	—	1	—	1	24 „ 36	—	—	—	1
17 „ 25	16	3	—	22	24 „ 40	—	—	—	20
17 „ 30	6	5	—	15	24 „ 42	—	—	—	4
17 „ 35	2	2	1	10	24 „ 45	—	—	—	1
17 „ 36	—	—	1	2	25 „ 35	1	—	—	8
17 „ 40	—	—	—	2	25 „ 39	—	—	1	1
17 „ 45	—	6	—	6	25 „ 40	—	1	4	22
17 „ 50	—	—	—	1	25 „ 42	—	—	—	5
17 „ 0	—	1	—	1	25 „ 45	—	1	—	15
18 „ 22	1	—	—	1	25 „ 50	—	—	—	2
18 „ 23	1	—	—	2	25 „ 55	—	—	—	1
18 „ 24	2	—	—	4	28 „ 50	—	—	—	1
18 „ 25	35	8	—	53	30 „ 40	—	—	—	2
18 „ 26	3	—	—	3	30 „ 45	—	—	—	3
18 „ 28	1	—	—	1	30 „ 50	—	—	—	3
18 „ 30	13	7	—	25	35 „ 45	—	—	—	1
18 „ 35	7	2	3	18	35 „ 50	—	—	—	1
18 „ 40	7	2	1	12	Number of limits Number of classes	30	24	20	93
18 „ 45	3	2	—	6					
18 „ 0	—	2	—	2					
19 „ 25	2	2	—	6					
19 „ 26	—	—	—	1	135				61